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Kontakt/Contact

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SUB Göttingen
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 1
37073 Göttingen

✉ info@digizeitschriften.de

This large Bashkirian dictionary is a significant result of Bashkirian lexicography and will prove to be a useful tool in Bashkirian studies. The only reason for the few critical remarks made in the present review is to turn the attention of experts to some of the tasks Bashkirian philology must cope with in the future.

Peter Bakker: Review of Otto Ladstätter & Andreas Tietze: *Die Abdal (Äynu) in Xinjiang*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1994. 116 pp. ISBN 3-7001-2076-1.

Peter Bakker, Institut for Lingvistik, Aarhus Universitet, DK-800 Aarhus-C, Denmark.

The title does not show this book's relevance for the study of Turkic languages. But it is indeed: the language of the Abdals of Xinjiang in Chinese Turkestan is a mixture of Persian vocabulary with the grammatical system of Uyghur. The Äynu, as they call themselves, are a separate group, who claim that they are originally from Persia. This name has no known etymology. Outsiders, such as the Uyghurs, call them Abdal. A Sinologist and a Turcologist have joined forces to unravel the mystery of the origin of the Abdal people by studying the published sources as well as by doing ethnographic, historical and linguistic fieldwork in China. In their quest for the roots of the Abdals, they make use of travel reports, oral traditions, published studies and linguistic material collected both by the authors and others. The result is a fascinating story, which, however, raises more questions than it answers.

The Abdals are a peripatetic group, superficially similar in the supposed lifestyle and appearance to the Roma (Gypsies), but not related to them. Groups called Abdals are found in many parts of the Turkish speaking territories: in any case Anatolia, South Central Asia and Chinese Turkestan. In all of these regions the grammatical system of the language of the Abdals is that of the local Turkish language and the basic lexicon is partly of Persian and partly of unknown origin. Some of these unknown core words recur in the different Abdal varieties, and these words may contain the key to their origin.

As mentioned, the grammatical system of Abdal is identical to that of Uyghur in China (and other Turkic languages elsewhere), as is clear from the following example:

pedir- <i>im</i>	hatta- <i>din</i>	jek	saŋ ateš	yn- <i>di</i>	(Abdal)
dada- <i>m</i>	bazar- <i>din</i>	<i>bir</i>	tšaqmaq teši	epkep- <i>tu</i>	(Uyghur)
father-1.POSS	market-ABL	one	flint-stone	bring-PST	
'my father brought a flint-stone from the market'					

In this Abdal example the Uyghur grammatical elements are underlined, and they are completely identical in the two languages (abstracting from morphophonemics). Word order is also identical, except for the order noun-modifier. Note also that Uyghur has the Persian borrowing *bazar*, where Abdal has a typically Abdal word. In Abdal as in Uyghur, there is no vowel harmony in the ablative. In the word for 'flint-stone', the order of the head noun and modifier is reversed, following Persian and Turkish patterns respectively.

The authors discuss no less than fourteen hypotheses formulated about the origin of these people: Jews, religious sectarians, descendants of Islamic missionaries, Gypsies, mendicant monks, descendants of the Hephthalites, etc. None of these presents itself as the obvious truth, and many can be dismissed right away.

By studying the linguistic data on the language, the authors hope to get closer to a solution. The grammatical system is of no use for historical reconstruction, as it is identical to the local Uyghur language (in the Chinese variety of Abdal, that is). One has to study the lexicon. Abdal in China contains many Uyghur elements, which is not surprising as all of the Abdals speak Uyghur beside their own, mixed language of Uyghur and Persian. Further there are about a dozen words from other Turkic languages, many from Iranian languages, especially Persian, a few words from languages of Persian Luli-Gypsies and similar marginal groups of the Near East and Middle East, further about half a dozen Arabic words, a few from Chinese, but nothing from extinct languages of the area such as Tokharian, Soghdic and Khotanese, and none from living languages of Afghanistan or North India. The authors seem to have searched in vain for cognates in languages from India to Turkey. Despite their attempts, about 60 core words of the Abdal language remain unexplained, and therefore the origin of the Abdals as well. The impression one gets from the book is that the Abdals could be the remainder of some disappeared people who lost their original language except for a core of words, as was suggested more explicitly elsewhere by Tietze (1991).

There is another possible solution, however, which is not discussed or mentioned in this book. In other areas of the world there are also reports on mixed languages like Abdal, combining the grammatical system of one language with the lexicon of another. Most of these languages are spoken either by groups of settled nomads or new ethnic groups. The settled nomads retain the lexicon of their original, imported language, but embed this in the grammatical system of the language of the host

country. The new ethnic groups who speak such a mixed language were formed by immigrant men, all speakers of some language, who all married local women, speakers of another language. These men were often soldiers or traders. Their descendants, if they are numerous enough to become a separate ethnic group, combine the grammatical system of the language of the mothers with the lexicon of the language of the fathers. Examples of both types of mixed languages can be found in Bakker & Mous (1994).

Although the authors would have seemed to prefer a nomadic group if they had to choose to explain Abdal origins, the solution may be much more simple: descendants of Persian speaking traders who married Uyghur women and stayed behind in China. These traders would have travelled along the silk route. This becomes all the more likely if one plots places where Abdal is spoken in China: some of the identifiable places like Khotan, Keriya, Yarkand and Kashgar were major points along the (southern) silk route and other Chinese-Persian trade routes. This was also the conclusion reached by the Chinese-Australian linguist Mei W. Lee-Smith (1996) on the basis of her Abdal fieldwork (Lee-Smith 1996).

Although this hypothesis seems neat for the Abdals in Chinese Turkestan, it still needs to be studied and thoroughly tested. The presence of Abdals in Turkey, for instance, is still not well explainable as a result of the silk route trade. These Abdals also have a language with a Persian lexical stock and a Turkish grammatical system, which includes some of the words of unknown origin. Whether they could be related to the Abdals in China, is likely, but not certain.

Ladstätter and Tietze's book provides a most welcome study, summarizing a great number of works on the Abdals and their language, published in languages as varied as French, English, Chinese and Uyghur. The list of references contains everything published on Abdal and many other useful sources as well, forming a useful guide for further study of this forgotten marginal group of the Turkish world.

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